

DIAGNOSIS APPARATUS AND METHOD OF FUEL PUMP FOR INTERNAL COMBUSTION ENGINE

Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to a diagnosis apparatus and a diagnosis method of a fuel pump supplying fuel to an internal combustion engine.

Related Art of the Invention

Japanese Unexamined Utility Model Publication No. 63-052962 discloses an apparatus provided with a device detecting a discharge pressure of a fuel pump, for diagnosing an abnormality in the fuel pump based on the discharge pressure.

There is a case where a motor unit and a pump unit both constituting a fuel pump are constructed to be exchangeable separately.

In the case where such a fuel pump is used, if a failure diagnosis can be performed for each unit, it is possible to exchange only a failed unit.

However, there are cases where a normal discharge pressure cannot be obtained due to a failure of motor unit, and where the normal discharge pressure cannot be obtained due to a failure of pump unit.

Therefore, in the constitution where the diagnosis is performed based on the discharge pressure as in a conventional diagnosis apparatus, it is impossible to judge which unit is failed, the motor unit or the pump unit.

Consequently, conventionally, if the occurrence of failure is diagnosed, both the motor unit and pump unit are exchanged simultaneously, resulting in that a unit which is not failed is exchanged unnecessarily.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

It is therefore an object of the present invention to provide a diagnosis apparatus and a diagnosis method capable of diagnosing which unit is failed, a motor unit or a pump unit.

In order to accomplish the above-mentioned object, according to the present invention, a function of a fuel pump is diagnosed, and if it is diagnosed that the

function of the fuel pump is abnormal, then it is diagnosed whether or not a fuel pump is abnormal.

Then, when it is diagnosed that the motor unit is abnormal, a signal indicating a failure of the motor unit is output, while when it is judged that the motor unit is normal, a signal indicating a failure of the pump unit is output.

The other objects and features of the invention will become understood from the following description with reference to the accompanying drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Fig. 1 is a schematic diagram of an internal combustion engine to which a diagnosis apparatus according to the present invention is applied.

Fig. 2 is a flowchart of a failure diagnosis of a fuel pump.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

In an internal combustion engine 1 shown in Fig. 1, an electromagnetic type fuel injection valve 3 is disposed on an intake port 2.

Fuel is injected by fuel injection valve 3, to form an air-fuel mixture inside a combustion chamber of engine 1.

The air-fuel mixture is burnt by a spark ignition by an ignition plug 4.

The fuel inside a fuel tank 5 is sucked by a fuel pump 6 disposed inside fuel tank 5, and the fuel discharged from fuel pump 6 is sent to fuel injection valve 3 via fuel piping 7.

Fuel pump 6 consists of a motor unit 6a and a pump unit 6b.

Motor unit 6a and pump unit 6b are constructed separately from each other and therefore are exchangeable separately.

A turbine type pump sucking and discharging fuel in accordance with the rotation of an impeller is used as pump unit 6b.

Numerical 6c denotes a fuel filter disposed on a suction port of pump unit 6b.

Motor unit 6a is supplied with the electric power via a drive circuit 9 that is controlled by a control unit 8.

Control unit 8 comprises a microcomputer.

Control unit 8 controls an applied voltage on motor unit 6a, and also controls fuel injection timing and a fuel injection quantity of fuel injection valve 3.

Further, control unit 8 performs a failure diagnosis of fuel pump 6 as shown in a flowchart of Fig. 2.

In step S1, it is judged whether or not a fuel pressure inside fuel piping 7 normally rises in a state where fuel pump 6 is driven.

Specifically, it is judged whether or not a detection value of a fuel pressure sensor 10 detecting the fuel pressure inside fuel piping 7 reaches a predetermined slice level or above.

The slice level is variably set according to a drive control signal for fuel pump 6.

When it is judged in step S1 that the fuel pressure reaches the slice level or above, control returns step S1, where the judgment of fuel pressure is repeatedly performed.

On the other hand, when it is judged in step S1 that the fuel pressure is lower than the slice level, it is judged that a function of fuel pump 6 is abnormal, and then control proceeds to step S2.

In step S2, it is judged whether or not the applied voltage on motor unit 6a is normal, and/or whether or not the power consumption in motor unit 6a is normal.

Note, the applied voltage and the power consumption are judged based on detection results by a voltmeter 9a and an ammeter 9b both disposed in drive circuit 9.

Since the abnormality of fuel pressure (functional abnormality in fuel pump) is detected in step S1, it is estimated that either motor unit 6a or pump unit 6b is failed.

It is impossible to specify which unit is failed, motor unit 6a or pump unit 6b,

based on the fuel pressure.

However, when it is judged in step S2 that the applied voltage on motor unit 6a and/or the power consumption in motor unit 6a is abnormal, it is estimated that the functional abnormality in fuel pump 6 is caused by the failure of motor unit 6a.

On the other hand, when it is judged in step S2 that the applied voltage on motor unit 6a and/or the power consumption in motor unit 6a is normal, the fuel pressure is lower than the slice level, although motor unit 6a is normal. Accordingly, it is estimated that the functional abnormality in fuel pump is caused by the failure of pump unit 6b.

Therefore, when it is judged in step S2 that the applied voltage on motor unit 6a and/or the power consumption in motor unit 6a is abnormal, control proceeds to step S3, where a failure judging signal of motor unit 6a is output.

On the other hand, when it is judged in step S2 that the applied voltage on motor unit 6a and/or the power consumption in motor unit 6a is normal, control proceeds to step S4, where a failure judging signal of pump unit 6b is output.

A result of failure diagnosis is stored in control unit 8.

Further, when the occurrence of failure is diagnosed, a warning is given to a driver by a warning device.

Since it is judged whether motor unit 6a is failed or pump unit 6b is failed in fuel pump 6, and further, motor unit 6a and pump unit 6b are constructed to be exchangeable separately, it is possible to exchange only a unit that has been diagnosed as failed.

Consequently, a normal unit is not exchanged unnecessarily.

In the present embodiment, fuel pump 6 is disposed inside fuel tank 5. However, the constitution may be such that fuel pump 6 is disposed outside fuel tank 5.

The entire contents of Japanese Patent Application No. 2002-356467 filed on December 9, 2002, a priority of which is claimed, are incorporated herein by reference.

While only a selected embodiment has been chosen to illustrate the present invention, it will be apparent to those skilled in the art from this disclosure that various changes and modifications can be made herein without departing from the scope of the invention as defined in the appended claims.

Furthermore, the foregoing description of the embodiment according to the present invention is provided for illustration only, and not for the purpose of limiting the invention as defined in the appended claims and their equivalents.